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November 11, 2009

## Little red flowers and remembering veterans

By Capt. Dayna Rowden  
MND-S



Ever wonder what the significance is of the little red flowers that the Veterans of Foreign Wars hand out? What are they and what do they mean? The answer to the first question is simple. They are poppies. Red-flowered corn poppies. So, what's with the poppies?

Poppies have long been used as a symbol of both sleep and death: sleep because of the opium extracted from them, and death because of their blood-red color. In Greco-Roman myths, poppies were used as offerings to the dead. The bright scarlet color symbolized the promise of resurrection after death.

One of the most poignant symbols of the cost of World War I is the cemetery at Flanders Field in Ypres, Belgium. In the nearly 150 cemeteries in this area, row upon row of crosses and headstones mark the graves of some of the 1 million US, European and Australian soldiers and civilians who gave their lives in almost four years of combat on the western front near Ypres. More than 54,000 crosses mark the graves of unknown dead.

Among the rows in the gardens of stone, life and resurrection spring forth in the form of the red-flowered corn poppy, a common plant in Europe. Canadian surgeon and soldier, Lt. Col. John McCrae wrote the poem ["In Flanders Fields"](#) May 3, 1915, after witnessing the death of his friend, Lt. Alexis Helmer. In tribute to the opening lines of McCrae's poem, Moina Michael vowed in her 1915 poem ["We Shall Keep the Faith"](#) to always wear a red poppy as a symbol of remembrance for those who served in the war. Thus the plant became a symbol for the dead World War I soldiers.

Veterans groups in England, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the Unit-



Courtesy photo

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ed States have adopted the red poppy as not only a symbol of remembrance of the sacrifice of veterans who have died but of the continued sacrifice that veterans make in service to their countries.

While serving a year in Iraq, days may seem to pass with little difference from one to the next. We try to mark important holidays through decorations, barbeques, picnics and concerts. These celebrations help to remind us of our loved ones and of our rituals and normalcy back at home. Still, the significance of holidays and celebrations may be lost in our separation from what makes them so dear.

Veterans Day is not one of those holidays. In fact, being in a combat zone reminds us of the sacrifice and service that make this holiday so significant. Strip away the barbeques. Get rid of the days off. Take down the red, white and blue

bunting and the patriotic parades. What do you have left? You have the essence of this somber day. Remembrance.

What are we remembering? We remember that by the signing of the Armistice at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 marking the end of World War I, more than 20 million from over 26 countries were dead. We are not alone in this remembrance. In many parts of the world people take a two-minute moment of silence at 11 a.m. as a sign of respect for people who died in the war. When you see the simple and humble poppy, think about the sacrifice of the veterans who have come before you and the ones that will follow. Though poppies grow, we should not sleep. We should carry the torch, remain vigilant and remember.

For more from Capt. Rowden, visit: [www.TheRedBulls.org/Rowden](http://www.TheRedBulls.org/Rowden)



# Signal Company takes aim at qualification range



Photo by Spc. Maurice A. Galloway

Soldiers from the 256th Signal Company, 17th Fires Brigade conducted a qualification range Nov. 5 at Contingency Operating Base Basra. The range was used to confirm weapon settings and the qualification results will be used for an upcoming board.

## THE RED BULL REPORT

34th Red Bull Infantry Division  
Public Affairs Office



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Maj. Gen. Rick Nash



Command Sergeant Major  
Command Sgt. Maj. Doug Julin

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- 28th Combat Aviation Brigade
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# Military to reduce hostile fire pay

By Pfc. J. Princeville Lawrence  
MND-S



Seven dollars and fifty cents.

That's now how much service members who spend one day in a warzone will end up getting for hostile fire pay.

It's quite a pay cut from \$225, which is what they would have previously earned in hostile fire pay for that one day.

A service member could once spend as little as one day a month in a combat zone to earn full monthly combat benefits, but under section 618 of the new defense authorization bill signed Oct. 29, service members will receive pro-rated war-zone pay for the 2010 fiscal year, which starts Oct. 1, 2009.

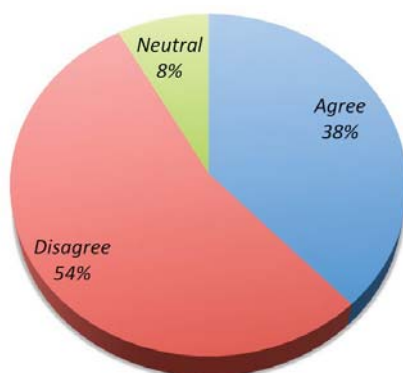
Payment of hostile fire pay, imminent danger pay, hazardous duty pay, assignment pay, skill incentive pay and associated tax breaks will be based on actual days of qualifying service per month.

Experts cite widespread allegations of people manipulating the system (including stories of people arranging flights into a combat zone during the last few days of one month and the first few days of the next, earning two full months of combat pay) as the basis for the new law.

Service members at Contingency Operating Base Basra were split about the decision. 38% of service members polled agreed with the new law, while 54% disagreed and 8% were neutral.

Many who agreed with the policy said the law was long overdue.

## Pro-rated combat pay: Soldiers' opinion



Soldiers at Contingency Operating Base Basra were split about the military's recent change toward pro-rated combat pay. There were 76 service members polled.



Under section 618 of the new defense authorization bill signed Oct. 29, service members will receive pro-rated war-zone pay for the 2010 fiscal year, which starts Oct. 1, 2009.

"I believe it's the more fiscally responsible thing to do," said Sgt. Joel Peterson, a Duluth, Minn., native and protection administrator for the 34th Infantry Division.

However, the majority of service members objected to what they consider a pay cut.

"I believe this is a poor decision," said Lt. Col. Thomas Sonnen, a St. Paul, Minn., native and deputy information operations officer with the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division. "I would say that getting a full month of combat pay at the end of a year-long combat tour is one of the few perks that Soldiers get for the long deployments and hardships they face while separated from their families. I think the number of abuses is small in comparison to the 200,000 or more men and women currently serving extended combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan."

"They're punishing all the Soldiers because of a few bad apples," said Maj. Juan Jose Perez, deputy division safety officer. "If you're willing to come to a combat zone, then the Army should compensate you for that. You made a commitment to the military, and I think the military should honor their commitment to the Soldier."

Many service members found themselves switching back and forth between opinions, and some agreed with the law but thought that it could be better.

"I agree that the military should become more efficient, but there are better ways than to take a Soldier's pay," said Spc. Andrew Zandlo, a Braham, Minn., native and an aviation operations specialist with the 34th Inf. Div.

Financial services in Contingency Operating Base Basra said they had not yet received guidance on the change.

For more of Pfc. Lawrence's stories, visit:  
[www.TheRedBulls.org/Lawrence](http://www.TheRedBulls.org/Lawrence)

## What do you think?

"I believe it's the more fiscally responsible thing to do."

- Sgt. Joel Peterson

"I agree that the military should become more efficient, but there are better ways than to take a Soldier's pay."

- Pfc. Andrew Zandlo

## Share your comments!

[www.TheRedBulls.org/article00435](http://www.TheRedBulls.org/article00435)



**Red Bull Radio  
PODCAST**

"Barney's last  
words"

[www.TheRedBulls.org/podcast](http://www.TheRedBulls.org/podcast)





**SHOW YOUR  
VIKINGS  
PRIDE**



**1st Lt. Heather Mangen, an intelligence officer with the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division, hoists the Gjallarhorn to show her support for the Minnesota Vikings. A contest will be held this Thursday for one Soldier to sound the horn via satellite this Sunday for the game against the Detroit Lions.**

**Auditions will be held at the Red Bull LSA volleyball courts November 12 at 19:00 hrs.**

**SOUND THE GJALLARHORN!**

## EYE INJURIES CAN OCCUR IN AN INSTANT!

*Think what it would be like to be blinded in a workplace accident, just because you decided not to put on your eye protection. You would regret the decision for the rest of your life. A seemingly minor burn or a cut can be disastrous when it involves your eyes. A piece of metal flying off a grinder might be barely noticed if it strikes another part of your body. However, if it strikes your eye it could cause permanent vision impairment. A chemical splash on your skin might cause a painful burn but it may eventually heal. If that splash went into your eyes, you might never see again. These injuries can be prevented, by working safely and wearing the required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the eyes.*



The eyes are subjected to many kinds of dangers at work. Here are just some of them:

- Small particles in the air
- Projectiles, from processes such as grinding and cutting
- Blows and impact
- Cuts
- Vapors
- Hot or molten material
- Splashes of chemical substances such as corrosives
- Certain light rays such as those from welding
- Excessive sunlight.

Enlist your safety office to help choose the right kind of eye protection for your work. You might require safety eyeglasses with side shields, or protec-

tive goggles. You may need filtered lenses to keep out harmful rays.

You might require a face shield to cover all of your face, or a hood to cover your entire head. You may have to wear a combination of these types of eye protection. For those that wear contact lenses, ensure the eye protection you are using is compatible with contact use.

You may need to remove your contacts first and wear prescription eye protection. It all depends on what sort of work you will be doing and the kinds of hazards you will face. It is also important to get the right fit. Your safety supervisor can help you out here as well. Correct fit will ensure the safety eyewear protects the way it should and it will encourage you to wear your eye protection when you should.

Today's safety eyewear is available in many styles and frame colors and looks as good as regular eyewear. Nevertheless, that is where the similarity ends. Safety glasses and street glasses are not interchangeable. Safety eyewear is made of special material designed to resist impact.

Do not forget about the importance of using safety eyewear off the job as well. Eye protection is required for many jobs at home, such as woodworking and using caustic cleaning products.

"A" moment to "B" safe will help you "C" your way home safely.

*For more about safety, visit:*

[www.TheRedBulls.org/SafeandSound](http://www.TheRedBulls.org/SafeandSound)





34TH RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION

# MINNESOTA VIKINGS VIEWING PARTY

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2009

MINNESOTA VIKINGS VS. DETROIT LIONS

21:00 hrs. @ THE RED BULL LSA, near the VOLLEYBALL COURTS

**NEW  
VENUE!**

NOTE: This is a specially-arranged Internet broadcast. This game will not be broadcast on AFN.  
The Red Bull LSA is the only location to watch the game on Contingency Operating Base Basra.

Be in the audience as the Red Bulls Viewing Party is linked LIVE via satellite to the Metrodome:

- ☐ 34th Infantry Division Band performs the National Anthem live from Iraq.
  - ☐ A Red Bull will sound the Gjallarhorn\* live from Basra prior to the Vikings taking the field.
  - ☐ The Viewing Party will be broadcast live back to the Metrodome for crowd reaction, contests, and showcasing enthusiastic Vikings fans on the Jumbotron.
  - ☐ A Red Bull Soldier will speak live to their family on the field at halftime.
  - ☐ Special ticket discounts are available for families at the Metrodome. Quantities are limited.
- Visit [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org), click "Vikings Military Appreciation Day" for details.

**ARRIVE BY 20:30  
FOR THE LIVE  
PRE-GAME ACTIVITIES  
WITH  
THE METRODOME!**

**COME JOIN THE EXCITEMENT!  
REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE.**

\*Each home game, an honoree is selected to start the game by sounding the GJALLARHORN, a Nordic war horn.

## SOUND THE GJALLARHORN!

Represent the Red Bulls to start the game at the Metrodome.  
Auditions at Red Bull LSA volleyball court Thursday, November 12 at 19:00

**WEAR YOUR  
VIKINGS GEAR!  
BRING SIGNS!**

SKOL, VIKINGS  
**GO VIKES!**







## Around the world in 34 seconds



**SEOUL** - Navies from the rival Koreas exchanged gunfire for the first time in seven years on Nov. 10, damaging vessels on both sides and raising tension just days before President Barack Obama travels to Asia. North Korea has often used military action to force its way onto the agenda of major diplomatic events and has been seeking direct talks with Obama's administration while alarming global powers by last week saying it had produced more arms-grade plutonium. The United States will announce in the next few days whether it will start direct talks with the North which could kickstart a fresh round of talks with regional powers on nuclear disarmament, a U.S. official said earlier. South Korea denounced what it said was an incursion by a North Korean patrol vessel into its territorial waters in the Yellow Sea that sparked a brief firefight near the spot where the two Koreas have had two deadly conflicts in the past decade.



**WASHINGTON** - U.S. intelligence agencies learned an Army psychiatrist contacted an Islamist sympathetic to al Qaeda and they relayed the information to authorities before the man allegedly went on a shooting spree that killed 13 people in Texas last week, U.S. officials said Nov. 9. While the agencies were monitoring contacts by Anwar al-Awlaki, a fiery, anti-American cleric in Yemen who sympathized with al Qaeda, they came across some communications late last year with the shooting suspect, Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, U.S. government officials said. Authorities have decided to charge Hasan, a U.S.-born Muslim of Palestinian descent, in a military court following the Nov. 5 shooting at the Fort Hood Army post where 30 others were also wounded, two of the government officials said.



**PHILADELPHIA** - Steve Nash scored 21 points and made 20 assists as the Phoenix Suns continued their fine start to the season with a 119-115 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers Nov. 9. Jason Richardson top-scored with 29 points as the Suns (7-1) overcame an eight-point deficit in the final quarter to move clear of the idle LA Lakers at the top of the Western Conference. Andre Iguodala led the way for the 76ers with 24 points while Marreese Speights chipped in with 20 as Philadelphia fell to 3-4. The Suns, who failed to make the playoffs last year, trailed the 76ers 102-94 with 7:07 remaining but rallied to post their third straight victory. "It's a great start to the season for us," Nash told reporters after posting his first 20-20 game since the 2005-06 season. "We weren't really sure what to expect from this team out of the gate. We want to build a really nice chemistry and play hard at the very least."



**LONDON** - A British man on the run from police sent a picture of himself to his local paper because he disliked the mugshot they had printed of him as part of a public appeal to track him down. South Wales Police had issued media with the photo of Matthew Maynard, wanted by officers investigating a house burglary, as part of a crackdown on crime in Swansea. When it appeared in the South Wales Evening Post, the 23-year-old sent the newspaper a replacement photo of himself standing in front of a police van. They obligingly printed it on the front page. The police thanked him for helping them in their appeal, saying: "Everyone in Swansea will know what he looks like now."